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Biography.

A REMARKABLE EXPERIENCE.

[In a letter to the Rev. Mr. Newton.]

My dear and Rev. Sir,

I AM deep in your debt for a train of favours, for which I have often thanked you, and ſtill a grateful remembrance is retained. I cannot give a greater proof of my confidence, than by committing to your truſt a brief detailof my late extraordinary case and cure. This I promiſed to do in a former letter, ſaying, that my main intention was by it to capacitate you ſtill more for ſpeaking pertinently to the caſe of diſtreſſed, diſturbed minds, as they came in your way; my motive is not altered.

I am not very anxious whether friends may judge me a believer or not, previous to my furnace ſtate: But I have no freedom myſelf in calling it in queſtion. If not a believer, I was greatly miſtaken indeed; ſurely I ate bread of which the world are ignorant; at leaſt I think ſo. I was awakened by the teſtimony of Jeſus; after a term of terror, was comforted by the doctrine of a Saviour. Perhaps I attained to the ſtature of A in Omicron; I am certain I thought ſo.

My knowledge of downright believing was exceedingly ſcanty; my hopes were too eaſily raiſed or ſunk in proportion to the fineneſs or agreeableneſs of my inward feelings on the one hand, and their dullneſs or diſagreeableneſs on the other. I was not fully inſtructed in the unchangeableneſs of the divine veracity and love. I mean no reflection againſt my teachers, but only againſt my own perception of the truths revealed and taught. I read the Bible; but my mind was not ſufficiently opened, *ſimply* to receive what

it taught me, without intermixing fancied trash of my own. I knew some of my contemporary brethren were in the same predicament if language has an affixed meaning. They spoke like me, so I suppose they felt like me. But, waving this, the length I afterwards went, in secret departures from the God of Abraham, was great! As a singular monument of the superabounding riches of saving, sovereign, redeeming mercy, I say what follows:

My falling away was gradual, like the declension from noon to night. I think the decay of comfort in secret prayer was the first bad symptom which made its appearance. This ruffled me for a while, but it soon became familiar as a companion, and caused little uneasiness. I had pleasure in attending the administration of the word for a long time after this took place; and when *this*, in a great degree, abated, my profession dwindled into formality. All along I had a regard for the true godly, associated with none else; these were the men of my councils. For a considerable time I had little heart for attending private societies of Christians, and was pleased when apparently good excuse presented for non-attendance, though, upon the whole, I was one of the most regular attendants on the meetings of which I was a member. I am relating facts, so must not accuse myself except where guilty. At this time I knew I was doing wrong, and lazily wished I had a heart to do better, but had no resolution to prosecute my desire.

In my worst situation I had a keen desire to be useful to others; and I cannot say it was wholly from selfish motives. I had often an opportunity of visiting the sick and the dying, but seldom possessed a proper spirit or frame for talking to them in a way consonant to their case. Though the poor creatures might seem on the frontiers of eternity, no sympathising emotion would arise; dumbness would seize me; I could not speak; I could not pray. I lost much of my reverence for the Sabbath; found the commandment to sanctify it had no internal restraint upon my mind. I began to use freedoms with it; to talk about news, or some occurrence which my judgment told me was unsuitable conversation for such an occasion. This did me great injury; defacing all that the word had effected, and throwing me open to a thousand temptations through the week.

I always had a value for real religion, judging those alone happy who possessed it, and would have given a world to be like-minded with them; but the influences of the Spirit are not to be bought with money.

For a long time I only considered myself a Christian under backsliding; indeed, I had partial recoveries. But I had a secret sin which easily beset me, and, in process of time, I became its humble servant. I often opposed it, but oftener complied with it; I pleaded in favour of it at the bar of my mind, endeavouring to silence every witness which appeared against it. Something would

would ſay, will you commit this ſin and riſk heaven? another thought would ſtart up, and ſay, do it, pray do it, you know you can repent of it at a future period; it is as eaſy to repent of many as of one ſin; do comply; ſo I complied! On this, Satan would ſuggeſt, now you have eaten the forbidden fruit like Adam; you are a loſt man; you have gone too far for repentance to have any weight. This affair would create a buſtle for a while; but it was ſoon over. However, the remembrance of it in retirement was never effaced, but often filled me with uneaſineſs and anxious concern; but was long in reaching the conſcience.

I often omitted prayer when from home without much uneaſineſs, and was always conſcious I was unprepared for dying, and became afraid at the thoughts of death; but ſome glimmering hope continued for years. I thought I ſaw hypocriſy written upon all my actions, but had ſome hope I was not a hypocrite, and often deſired *ſelf* not to interfere with my actions; but he always had a large ſhare in them. I often groaned after performing a generous action. My natural temper led me to be ſerviceable to every body, and I was univerſally eſteemed, and ſpoken well of, but was ſeldom commended without a gloom overſpreading my mind. I ſometimes pitied *man*, who could be eaſily impoſed on, who could only judge from the external appearance. Though my reliſh for ſpiritual converſe was often ſo flat as to incapacitate me for promoting it, yet I moſtly deſired that it ſhould be the chief topic of diſcourſe among the Lord's people, and had moſt ſatisfaction when it was. I was often tempted to lay a little ſtreſs upon my having a name to live, but was conſcious that I was dead; and this ſtung me to the heart. Reflection upon my conduct through no day was pleaſant. When I turned my eye to the offers of the goſpel, my mind was always dark and full of embarraſſment. I confeſſed them all truths, but none of them pointed at me; conſequently the moſt explicit goſpel-offer yielded me only a *perhaps*.

I think it was about the beginning of 1794 my conſcience began to haraſs me. This, for a conſiderable ſpace, happened only about bed-time, or when I awoke during the night; but ordinarily this paſſed unnoticed in the day-time, and then I was cheerful, ſecretly hoping things would turn out, by and by, better than my fears. Oh! deceitful and deſperately wicked heart!

At this period I was continually haraſſed by invitations to ſuppers. At theſe I generally remained too long; the company being always agreeable. May the Lord ever deliver me from ſupping in ſtrange houſes! they had almoſt ruined my ſoul. Family duty neglected at home; a bad example ſet to others; ſecret duty *hurried* over, and the mind totally diſſipated!

Upon a certain occaſion I attended a company for three or four nights to a late hour. Several ſerious young people made part of the company: This ſtared me in the face as a moſt deſtructive

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example to them; and this conduct was the first thing, so far as I recollect, that mightily roused my conscience; then all my guilt rushed into my mind like a mighty torrent, so that I thought I should have perished in my affliction! By night I could not sleep for the horrible anguish which gnawed upon my guilty soul; the horrors of hell took hold of me, and I knew not what to do; my day of grace was gone; my damnation just and sure. I was filled with a fearful looking-for of judgment, and fiery indignation to consume me as God's adversary. I looked into the Bible; but always stinging texts looked me in the face. I often tried to find comfort from that precious word, Isa. i. 18. "Though your sins be as scarlet, &c." but I could not reason myself into the reception of it. That word, "My Spirit shall not always strive with you," pierced me to the quick; and that other, "What a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." The flames of hell seemed beginning to take hold of me! I shrunk! I moaned! I cried! For all this my heart was hard as the nether millstone. A sight of the horrors into which sin hath plunged us, may terrify, but can never melt the sinner's heart. Indeed, indeed I was brought very low, as much so as Satan could well bring a guilty soul on this side death. Glad would I have been to be metamorphosed, not like Nebuchadnezzar almost, but altogether into a beast, that I might avoid the awful, but righteous, indignation of Jehovah. Day and night was I tortured. Nor had I freedom to reveal my case to any man: Often was I on the eve of doing it; but the Lord had determined that flesh and blood were not to be the means of my relief. During many sermons that I heard, I sat as a condemned criminal, believing that others were fed while I was hungry; no food for me. Some people desire to have what is called a law work; but had they an hour of what I have faintly described above, they would wish they had never been born.

The arrows of the Almighty stuck faster and deeper, as days and hours moved on. The comfortable testimonies of Jesus flew all past me, or rather were all rejected by me. Judas, Julian, and such rejecters of the gospel, were viewed as the men who were to be my eternal associates; often wishing I had never known the gospel; envying the situation of the most abandoned debauchee, who remained unawakened, untormented before the time: And though I am now relieved, I feel horror in committing it to paper. But I have this reason among others for doing it, that it may prove a mean to humble and stir me up in a day of pride or unwatchfulness, and that I may never forget gratitude to my great Deliverer, who snatched me from the gaping mouth of such an horrible pit. My dear Saviour, let me never forget this hour and power of darkness! and never think of mine, without wondering at thine! Mine was but a drop; thine an ocean! Mine I deserved; thine was for me!

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It is a moſt mournful proof of the dead hardneſs of the impenitent heart of man, when he can ſmile while deliverance from wrath remains an uncertainty. It is no leſs wonderful to think that the redeemed of the Lord are not always filled with rapturous triumph while on earth. O the patience, the kindneſs, the love, and the forbearance of the Almighty! What plagues hath ſin introduced into the world! What glorious grace hath God manifeſted! I have to praiſe the Lord this day, that life and reaſon were both preſerved.

I juſt now recollect that, in the midſt of my anguiſh of ſoul, I thought I ſhould be under the neceſſity of applying to ſpirituous liquors for relief from my tormented mind: But this I was preſerved from putting in execution, excepting one time about midnight, being ſo tormented that I feared my bowels would rend me with the burning and boiling of the fired conſcience. I roſe, and took one glaſs of ſpirits; but, ah! this was but a poor relief. It had no effect, but rather ſharpened my anguiſh. I then lighted a candle, and pored, with extreme horror, upon Pſalm lxxxviii. from ver. 14. I perceived my caſe worded there; but my hour being not yet come, it afforded no alleviation. This to me was indeed the hour and power of darkneſs. All the invention of Popiſh tormentors could not have cauſed ſuch agony as then I felt. I thought I ſhould be looked for in heaven by many of my friends, and not be found; this thought alſo ſtung me to the quick. I believed God would make me the butt of his vengeance. When I felt the ſmalleſt impediment in a ſingle breath, I trembled, as if a harbinger of death had appeared. The fidelity of God in the execution of his threatening was a tremendous truth. This moment my fleſh ſhrinks, on identifying to my mind my then amazing horror.

I had as ſtrong impreſſions of the felicity of heaven in the midſt of this diſtreſs as ever I had: This deepened and enlarged my wound. I beheld the glories of heaven as Dives may be ſuppoſed to have viewed the happineſs of Lazarus from the centre of hell.

The ſtate of infants, and ſuch as had not lived long enough to reject the goſpel, appeared happineſs: There was a poſſibility of their being recovered and pardoned, but all this was over with me.

I thought that I believed the Bible a true revelation from God, but I ſoberly believed it the higheſt preſumption for me to receive any comfort from the truths recorded in it; becauſe, having taſted of the powers of the world to come, and afterwards fed upon ſin in a way as if preferring it to the chief good, I called this atrocious, and ſo it was. But, ah! that I ſhould have admitted the thought, that it overtopt the merit of the Mediator's righteouſneſs; but I was led captive by, and bound under the ſin of unbelief.

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I believed Chriſt was once very friendly to me in months *paſt*, but this friendſhip I had diſregarded and neglected; that now he would make me an example of his vengeance, and vindicate his injured goodneſs, by making me, in the judgment-day, a ſpectacle of horror, ſhame, and diſmay. To expreſs the inward gnawing anguiſh which uniformly ſucceeded theſe diſmal apprehenſions, is beyond the power of a human pen. I rejoice I now relate it as a paſt event.

Fierce as my chaſtiſement was, it was ſhort and ſlight, compared with what I juſtly merited. Three months was about the length of its *ſharpeſt* continuance, and even during that period I had often intervals of quiet through the day; but, in general, I trembled when darkneſs overſpread the heavens: The return of the evening, ſweet to the huſbandman, was like the ſhock of an earthquake to me. A perſon who never waded theſe deep waters, can have no more conception of them, than of the glory of the third heavens. No wonder that the multitude of the heavenly hoſts made the air reſound with their ſongs at the incarnation of the great DELIVERER of ſinners from all this wrath. They felt for man! But the natural man pities not himſelf; ſaints are mourning for him, when he is laughing at them. May I ever recoil at the thought of offending ſuch a God, ſuch a Saviour! May I ever poſſeſs a deep ſenſe of the magnitude of divine mercy!

To be continued.

Religious Communications.

ON REDEMPTION AND JUSTIFICATION.

REV. AND RESPECTED SIR, ———, *Dec.* 27, 1765.

INDULGE me a little familiarity, ſince my eſteem for you is great, and my confidence in you equally ſo.

I fear I have long been ſtumbling at that which was to the Jews a ſtumbling block, and to the Greeks fooliſhneſs. What is the ground of our acceptance with God? is the queſtion which now lies uppermoſt in my mind. And at the time I ought to teach others, I have need that one ſhould teach me what be the firſt principles of the goſpel of Chriſt. I could once have readily anſwered this queſtion, by ſaying, *The righteouſneſs of Chriſt.* But *now* another immediately occurs, Do we become intereſted in the redemption and righteouſneſs of Chriſt by the electing love of God, or by any motions of our own? If by the electing love of God we are choſen to be heirs, and brought into a covenant relation with him, where is the ſignificancy of all the exhortations to ſinners to perform a certain act, in order to their acceptance with God?

God? And if in any meaſure by our own doings, why have we not cauſe to glory, and that before God? Sir, I do but propoſe theſe things, and humbly deſire an anſwer for my own inſtruction.

I am, &c. T. C——n.

To the Rev. Mr. S. Hopkins.

The foregoing Letter was the occaſion of the ſtating the following Queſtions, and of the Anſwers to them.

Queſtion I. DO men become intereſted in the redemption and righteouſneſs of Chriſt, by the electing love of God, without any condition on their part; or by ſome motions and exerciſes of their own as a condition?

Anſwer. In order to give a clear anſwer to this queſtion, and remove ſome difficulties, and, I think, confuſion, which have been in the minds of many, reſpecting it, we muſt diſtinguiſh between what is called the *covenant of redemption;* or the covenant in which God the Father is one party covenanting, and the Mediator the other, conſidered as a public head and repreſentative, and acting for both himſelf, and the elect; or *his whole ſelf*, which is all the elect, both head and members: I ſay, we muſt diſtinguiſh between *this*, and the covenant which is entered into, and ſubſiſts between the Mediator, the head and huſband of the church; and the church, or the elect, his body, his members; which is the ground of their actual union with him: This is called *the covenant of grace.*

The covenant of redemption contains the promiſes made by the Father, to the Mediator, and the elect *in him*, conſidered as his members, of whom he is the head. Theſe promiſes contain all the good, every bleſſing that Chriſt, and his ſeed ſhall ever receive, or which they can want or deſire: And the only condition of theſe promiſes, or of this covenant, on the part of the Mediator and his future ſeed, is what the Mediator himſelf engaged to do and ſuffer: or, in one word, it is the righteouſneſs of Chriſt the Mediator.

The covenant of grace, or the covenant between Chriſt and his people, contains promiſes, on his part, of communion with him in all the good promiſed in the covenant of redemption; or of all he has to beſtow. The condition of theſe promiſes is, a hearty approbation and acceptance of him as our Mediator and Redeemer; or a cordial choice of him, as our ſpiritual head and huſband: By which we become his ſpouſe, his members and ſpiritual ſeed.

Chriſt having performed the condition of the covenant, made with him as a public head and ſurety; and ſo having a right to all the good things promiſed in that covenant, both to him as head, and to all who are or ſhall be in him, or united and married to him as their head and huſband; he comes to men, and offers himſelf to them, as one who has obtained theſe promiſes, and

and is ready to become their Redeemer, and beſtow all he has on them, as his children or ſpouſe, on condition that they will heartily chooſe and accept of him as their Redeemer; and ſo actually unite themſelves to him as their ſpiritual head and huſband.

Theſe two covenants are diſtinct and different one from the other. The *parties covenanting* are not the ſame. In *one*, God the Father, and Chriſt as Mediator and ſurety, and acting as the head of all his future members, are the only parties.

In *the other*, Chriſt the Mediator, as having completely fulfilled the condition of the covenant with the Father; and all thoſe who are willing to chooſe and truſt in him as their Saviour, and for the bleſſings he has to give; are the two parties in the covenant. The *conditions* are not the ſame. The condition of the firſt is performed wholly by the Mediator; and is that in which his merit and righteouſneſs conſiſt. The condition of the laſt is an active union of heart to the Mediator, which muſt be effected by the voluntary exerciſe of ſinners in *believing* on him, in order to their being actually intereſted in the bleſſings of redemption.

This matter may perhaps be further illuſtrated by the following ſimilitude.

A father points out to his ſon a particular perſon for his ſpouſe; and promiſes him, that if he will do all that is neceſſary in order to his marrying to her, and taking her into his family, conſiſtent with the honour and happineſs of the family, he will make him, and his propoſed and intended ſpouſe with him, heirs of all his eſtate: And makes many promiſes of what he will do for her, when ſhe ſhall become his wife. On the other hand, the ſon engages and undertakes to do all that the father propoſes to be done by him. This becomes a covenant between the father and the ſon, as head and huſband of the intended ſpouſe. And all the promiſes of good things to her, are to her, only as married to the ſon. The ſon punctually performs the condition; and ſo is entitled to all the good things promiſed to himſelf and his intended ſpouſe, when ſhe ſhall be married to him. He then applies to the woman, and tells her what he has done, and what promiſes are made to them jointly, when they ſhall be united in marriage. He offers himſelf to her, and invites her to come into this marriage relation by an actual, explicit conſent of her own, to be his wife. She conſents, and gives herſelf to him in marriage, and ſo ſhares with him in all he has got for himſelf and her.

In this inſtance, there are two covenants. One between the father and the ſon, with relation to his intended ſpouſe. The other, between the ſon and the woman, by which ſhe becomes actually intereſted in him, and ſo in all he has.

Here, in the father's chooſing, and pointing her out as the intended ſpouſe of his ſon; and in making promiſes to him, and in him to her, conſidered as his future ſpouſe, and ſo, as part of him, all theſe good things may be ſaid to be laid up for her, in his ſon,

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in and by this covenant. Yet ſhe has no actual title to them nor intereſt in them, until ſhe enters into the marriage covenant with the ſon, and is actually united to him as his ſpouſe. This may be eaſily applied to the caſe before us.

COROLLARY I.

This view of the point before us may ſerve to give us the meaning of thoſe paſſages of ſcripture, which ſpeak of the grace and eternal life of which the redeemed partake, as promiſed, or given to them in Chriſt, *before the world began.* 2 Tim. i. 9. Tit. i. 2. This was promiſed and given in the covenant of redemption to Chriſt, as head, and *in him*, to all his future members: To which promiſes and gift they are entitled, by uniting themſelves to him, and ſo becoming his members, by which believers enter into a particular covenant with Chriſt, which is called *the covenant of grace.*

COROLLARY II.

Though the promiſes of the covenant of redemption are not ſuſpended on any condition, to be performed by the elect, conſidered as by themſelves; but the condition of theſe promiſes has been performed by the Mediator, and made certain to him and to his members; yet, as none can be his members but by actually conſenting to take him for their head and huſband, there is reaſon and propriety in exhorting men thus to give their conſent; and in uſing means with them in order to bring them to this. The treaty carried on with men by inſtructing, exhorting and commanding, &c. in the uſe of means, relates to another covenant, which is to take place between Chriſt and the ſinner, the condition of which he muſt perform by a cordial compliance with it, as one who acts for himſelf, and as a party in this covenant.

From the foregoing, I hope it is made evident that the queſtion propoſed is to be anſwered in the following manner, viz.

The ſinner becomes intereſted in the redemption and righteouſneſs of Chriſt, not by the electing love of God, but by thoſe motions and exerciſes by which he cleaves to Chriſt, and truſts in him as his head and ſurety, for righteouſneſs and redemption. Theſe motions and exerciſes of heart, which are included in ſaving faith, are the proper ground and reaſon why one ſinner is received to favour, and an actual intereſt in all the benefits of redemption, rather than another; as much ſo, as the woman's actually marrying the ſon, is the condition, ground or reaſon why ſhe has a right in, and enjoys his eſtate, and all thoſe good things he has procured and provided for her, rather than another.

Queſtion II. If ſinners are intereſted in the righteouſneſs and redemption of Chriſt by any exerciſes and doings of their own, as the condition of ſuch intereſt, why have they not whereof to glory? And how is this conſiſtent with free juſtification, by mere grace?

Anſwer. If the motions and exerciſes, which are the condition of the ſinner's intereſt in redemption, are, conſidered as his exerciſes, really of no worth, ſo as in the leaſt degree, in this view, to recommend him to the favour he receives, or to render him a whit more worthy, or leſs unworthy of it; and if theſe motions and exerciſes imply and conſiſt in a ſenſe and hearty acknowledgment of this; then their being the condition of his admiſſion to favour, and a title to life, is no ground of boaſting, but the contrary; as the condition itſelf conſiſts in a diſpoſition and exerciſes directly contrary to boaſting, and which do expreſsly renounce it: And this is conſiſtent with the moſt free juſtification by mere grace. But this is true of thoſe motions and exerciſes which are the condition of the covenant of grace: Therefore,

The caſe of the ſinner is ſuch, he is ſo infinitely guilty, odious and ill-deſerving in God's ſight, that it is impoſſible any thing of his own, whatever exerciſes he has, ſhould in the leaſt recommend him, or abate his guilt and ill-deſert; or be conſidered as having a moral worth that can in the leaſt degree abate or countervail his unworthineſs and ill-deſert. This is evident two ways:

Firſt, from reaſon. If ſin be an infinite crime, ſo renders the ſinner *infinitely* odious and ill-deſerving, (which can be eaſily demonſtrated, and I ſhall now take it for granted) then no ſuppoſable degree of virtue of the ſinner, either before or after he has ſinned, can do any thing more towards abating his guilt and ill-deſert, than that which is finite can do towards counterbalancing that which is infinite: *which is juſt nothing at all.* Secondly, from divine revelation. This *curſes* every one who continues not in *all things* that it requires, and leaves him under this curſe, however long continued and eminent holineſs and obedience he may have exerciſed and performed before, or after ſuch a failure. No ſuch holineſs and obedience therefore can take the curſe off, in the leaſt degree. But to be curſed, is to be the object of God's hatred and diſpleaſure, and to be looked upon, and held, deſerving his eternal wrath. Therefore, according to law, the virtue of the ſinner cannot recommend him in the leaſt degree, or do any thing towards taking off the curſe of God that is upon him: But he remains as guilty and ill-deſerving as ever, in himſelf conſidered, and muſt do ſo to all eternity. Therefore, whatever virtuous motions and exerciſes of the ſinner are required, and neceſſary, as the condition of his intereſt in redemption, or the Redeemer, they cannot be conſidered as having any moral worth, ſufficient to have the leaſt influence in recommending him to God, on their own account, any more than if he was wholly without them; therefore can be no ground of glorying. They are ſo far from this, that theſe motions and exerciſes of the ſinner are in direct oppoſition to a diſpoſition to boaſt, and are a rejection and abhorrence of it, and conſiſt very much in a ſenſe and acknowledgment of infinite

infinite unworthineſs and ill-deſert, and of his need of the worthineſs and righteouſneſs of another, of Chriſt, and a truſt in that, and earneſt deſire to be found in it, to recommend him to favour; ſo ſet the ſinner at the *greateſt poſſible* remove from glorying; much more ſo, than if no ſuch exerciſes were neceſſary: For certainly the ſinner's ſenſe and hearty acknowledgment of his infinite ill-deſert, or of his being infinitely far from having any moral worth in himſelf to recommend him; and his truſting entirely to free, ſovereign grace, exerciſed through a worthy Mediator, for all he wants, ſets him farther from boaſting, and magnifies divine grace in his view more than any thing elſe could do.

If it be aſked, For what end theſe motions and exerciſes of the ſinner are required in order to an intereſt in the righteouſneſs of Chriſt: If they do not recommend by their moral worth, why may not the ſinner be juſtified and received to favour without them; what end do they anſwer?

I anſwer. Though the ſinner is not juſtified out of any reſpect to any *moral worth* in himſelf; but is, in this affair, conſidered as *ungodly*, that is, as infinitely ill deſerving and odious, and without all righteouſneſs or worth that can in the leaſt degree recommend him, as this is the truth of the caſe, whatever virtue he exerciſes: Yet it is neceſſary that the ſinner ſhould be *united* to the Mediator, as a ſpiritual head, huſband, and Saviour, in order to its being *fit* and proper that he ſhould be intereſted in his righteouſneſs and redemption; which cannot be in any other way but by the motions and exerciſes of his heart, in actually approving of Chriſt, in his character, accepting of the offers Chriſt makes, and truſting in him for righteouſneſs and redemption; for in *this* the union on his part conſiſts. Though the ſinner be juſtified not out of reſpect to any worthineſs of his own, (for in fact he neither has, nor can poſſibly have any) but wholly by the merit and righteouſneſs of the Redeemer; yet it is not *fit* that he ſhould be juſtified or received to favour out of reſpect to the worthineſs of the Mediator, ſo long as he is, in no ſenſe, one with him, or is not united to him as his member or ſpouſe. This is not fit and ſuitable, I ſay: Therefore, in order to its being ſuitable and fit that the ſinner ſhould be intereſted in Chriſt's righteouſneſs, he muſt heartily unite himſelf to Chriſt, by accepting of him, and truſting in him, as he offers himſelf. And though this exerciſe of the ſinner, by which he thus unites himſelf to Chriſt, be a virtuous or holy exerciſe, yet it is not out of reſpect to the virtuouſneſs of the exerciſe, or any moral worth in it, to recommend him, that the ſinner finds favour: For, as has been ſhewn, the ſinner's virtue is of no moral worth, in this caſe, nor can be reckoned to his account, ſo as to have any influence in his juſtification: It being, in this regard, juſt as if he had no virtue at all. It is the *relation to Chriſt*, into which the ſinner's exerciſes bring him, which avails to his juſtification by the Redeemer's righteouſneſs; and not the virtue and moral worth of the exerciſes by which

condition

he is brought into this relation. The fitneſs there is in faith, as a condition of juſtification, or an intereſt in the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, lies wholly in this, viz. *That it unites to the Mediator*; and not in any moral worth there is in it, however virtuous thoſe motions and exerciſes are, which faith includes. This therefore may be called a *natural* fitneſs, to diſtinguiſh it from a moral fitneſs, or a fitneſs which conſiſts in the virtue or moral excellency of any exerciſe, which, *on that account*, is the condition of ſome privilege.

They, doubtleſs, have underſtood, and meant to make this diſtinction, who have ſaid, that *faith does not juſtify, as a good work*, i. e. though it be a virtuous exerciſe, yet the virtue there is in faith does nothing, as ſuch, towards recommending the ſinner to an intereſt in the righteouſneſs of Chriſt: but faith juſtifies purely becauſe it unites to Chriſt, and brings the believer into ſuch a relation to him, that he is hereby properly intereſted in his merit and righteouſneſs. And the ſame thing, I ſuppoſe, has been meant, when it has been ſaid, "We are juſtified BY faith; but not FOR faith:" though this way of expreſſing the matter has been miſunderſtood by many; and conſequently ridiculed.

What has been obſerved under this head, may be farther illuſtrated by a more particular attention to the ſimilitude introduced under the former queſtion.

The woman, whom the ſon is to introduce into his father's family, by taking her into union with himſelf, as his ſpouſe, he having done all that was neceſſary to be done, in order to her being thus introduced to all the privileges of the family, conſiſtent with all the honours and intereſts of it: *This woman*, I ſay, has, to the higheſt degree, offended the head of the family; has been long an avowed enemy to him; and in all the ways ſhe could, has injured and caſt contempt upon him; has been guilty of murdering a number of his children; of attempting to burn his houſe over his head; of deſtroying his goods, &c. And out of enmity to him, and this his ſon, has ſold herſelf as a mean, abject ſlave to his enemies; and is, on the whole, of a character moſt odious and deſpicable. To *her* the ſon makes ſuit; offers himſelf to her, to become her friend and huſband, as one who is able to procure her pardon, and to introduce her to all the privileges of the family to which he belongs; to a joint communion with him in all his riches, honours and enjoyments: He invites her to accept of this propoſal, and give herſelf up to him in this relation, as the only condition of her being entitled to all theſe benefits, and ſharing fully in them. She hears the propoſal, and freely conſents to it, and hereby obtains all that good for which ſuch ample proviſion had been made.

Now, can any one think that her hearty conſent to this offer, and actually marrying the ſon, does, in itſelf conſidered, any thing toward recommending her to the head of the family, though required as a neceſſary condition of her pardon, and being received to favour; without which it would not have been fit and ſuitable

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to admit her to theſe privileges? Her thus accepting the propoſal, and marrying the ſon, renders it fit and proper that ſhe ſhould be admitted to favour, and treated kindly, *for his ſake alone*; which would have been altogether unfit, had ſhe rejected the propoſal, and refuſed to marry him. But this fitneſs does not lie in the virtue and excellency of that act; but in its uniting her to ſuch a worthy perſonage, who has merit in himſelf, by which alone ſhe is recommended.

And if ſhe ſhould look on this act of hers in accepting of this honourable and excellent perſon, and the advantageous and gracious propoſals he makes to her, as having ſufficient worthineſs in itſelf to countervail all her evil deeds and ill deſert, and recommend her to all theſe favours, and as what ſhe might reaſonably glory in, or boaſt of; this would be not only unreaſonable, but really inconſiſtent with a hearty compliance with the offer. Therefore ſuch a ſuppoſition is inconſiſtent with itſelf, and abſolutely impoſſible. Yea, ſuch a thought would be, itſelf, the greateſt affront, and highly diſpleaſing, both to the head of the family, and to the ſon: and would be ſo inconſiſtent with the exerciſe of any virtue, that it would really be a diſpoſition to juſtify herſelf in all her folly and guilt, and deſpiſe the father and the ſon, and all the kind offers made to her.

The more mean, unworthy, guilty, ill-deſerving, miſerable and needy this woman is, and the more honourable, excellent, condeſcending and kind her ſuitor is, the leſs worthineſs there is in her compliance with the propoſal, and ſo much farther is it from being of any avail to recommend her. In this inſtance, therefore, it is eaſy to ſee that it can have no influence at all to this purpoſe; and her acceptance of the offer is, at leaſt, an implicit acknowledgment of it.

This is but a faint repreſentation of the caſe before us; for there is, in truth, *an infinite difference*. In the ſimilitude we have been conſidering, the unworthineſs and ill deſert of the woman, though great, is but *finite;* therefore her repentance and virtue, in giving herſelf up to the ſon, as his bride, bears ſome proportion to her oppoſite unworthineſs and guilt, however *inconſiderable* it be, in compariſon with theſe. But *here* the odiouſneſs, unworthineſs and ill-deſert of the ſinner is truly *infinite:* ſo that the greateſt degree of virtue of a mere creature, which muſt be *finite*, bears no proportion to it; ſo does juſt nothing at all towards counterbalancing it: and therefore does nothing towards recommending him; but he remains as unworthy, and juſtly as much the object of God's diſpleaſure and wrath, in himſelf conſidered, as if he had no virtue at all. And conſequently, his pardon and deliverance from wrath, and finding acceptance and favour with God, is not, in the leaſt degree, out of reſpect to this, or becauſe it is well pleaſing to God; but purely becauſe by this he unites himſelf to the Mediator, who

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is worthy; and comes into that relation to him, that God may be juſt, may act a fit and becoming part, while he pardons and receives him to favour, out of reſpect to the merit and righteouſneſs of Chriſt.

Theſe things being duly conſidered, I think it will appear that though ſinners be intereſted in the righteouſneſs of Chriſt by the virtuous motions and exerciſes of their hearts, as the condition of it; yet this leaves no room for boaſting, and is in no degree inconſiſtent with their juſtification by free grace; yea, that this is the only way in which boaſting is moſt effectually excluded and the pride of man abaſed to the greateſt poſſible degree; and free grace exerciſed and made to appear in the brighteſt and moſt glorious light. For if theſe exerciſes, be they as virtuous and holy as they may, are of no moral worth to recommend the ſinner in the ſight of God, and cannot be acceptable to him, in the leaſt degree, conſidered as his exerciſes, and on his own account; and notwithſtanding theſe, he is juſt as unworthy and ill-deſerving as ever he was; then he certainly has nothing whereof to boaſt, unleſs it be his unworthineſs and ill-deſert; and he has as much need of free grace, as he could have on any ſuppoſition whatever. There is this difference indeed, that if the ſinner were juſtified without any virtuous exerciſes, and antecedent to all ſuch, he would not be truly ſenſible of his being without all moral worth, and that he is infinitely ill-deſerving; or, in other words, would not be effectually humbled, but would be of a diſpoſition to be proud and to boaſt, ſo would be in no degree ſenſible of the free, wonderful grace, exerciſed in his pardon and juſtification; for it is in the exerciſe of true virtue only that the ſinner has any true and proper ſenſe of this. In this view it appears neceſſary that the ſinner ſhould come to virtuous exerciſes, in order to exclude boaſting, as it can be effectually excluded no other way. For how much ſoever the way of ſalvation by a Mediator is calculated to exclude boaſting and humble the ſinner; yet this will not actually take effect until the ſinner is brought to the exerciſe of virtue or holineſs, ſince it is in the exerciſe of this alone, that the ſinner diſcerns what is the truth of the caſe, and feels accordingly, ſo is ſet at the greateſt diſtance from boaſting, and lies low in a ſenſe and hearty acknowledgment of his own infinite vileneſs and ill-deſert, and ſo feels his true need of infinitely free and ſovereign grace, and truſts in that alone. To ſuppoſe, therefore, that in order to exclude boaſting, all virtuous motions and exerciſes of heart muſt be excluded, is juſt as abſurd as to ſuppoſe that the only thing which does effectually exclude it, is inconſiſtent with its being excluded; or that, in order to a ſinner's being effectually humbled, he muſt not have the leaſt degree of humility; or rather, that true humility, in a ſenſe of infinite vileneſs, guilt, and ill-deſert, blinds him to God's free grace, and tends to make the ſinner a proud boaſter.

This

This leads me to obſerve, that they who would exclude all virtuous motions and exerciſes of the heart, antecedent to pardon and juſtification, and as the condition of an intereſt in the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, under the notion of excluding boaſting, and magnifying free grace, muſt, for the ſame reaſon, if they will be conſiſtent, exclude all virtue or holineſs from the redeemed forever. All they ſay, and their whole ſcheme with reſpect to this point, is built on the following maxim, or ſuppoſition, viz. *Whatever perſon, or ſinner, is, in any degree, truly virtuous, he hath whereof to glory; and is not wholly indebted to free grace for pardon and ſalvation.* Now, if this be true, then whatever ſinner has any right exerciſes of heart, and becomes truly holy, in any degree, whether it be before juſtification, or *after*, he hath whereof to glory, hath in himſelf ſuch moral worth and true merit as recommends him to favour in the ſight of God, and ſo is leſs beholden to free grace than if he had remained without any true holineſs. Many of thoſe, if not all, who eſpouſe the foregoing maxim, and on this ſuppoſition zealouſly oppoſe the doctrine of the neceſſity of the ſinner's coming to ſome degree of a virtuous diſpoſition and exerciſes, antecedent to juſtification, and in order to it, as being inconſiſtent with free grace, and tending to flatter the pride of men, do, at the ſame time, look on themſelves as holy perſons, or as living in the exerciſe of true grace. They, therefore, according to their own account of the matter, have *now* whereof to glory; ſomething worthy and meritorious in God's ſight; ſo ſtand not in *ſo much* need of the merit and righteouſneſs of Chriſt as they once did; nor are ſo much beholden to free grace for ſalvation as if they had no worthineſs of their own! I hope their *hearts* do not agree with their theory; if they do, they are certainly fallen from grace, and ſeeking righteouſneſs and ſalvation, as it were, by the works of the law, in the midſt of all their zeal about free grace, and concern to humble the pride of men, and exclude all boaſting. But if the above maxim has no foundation in truth, (and that it has not, I think has been proved) then all their zeal againſt the doctrine of ſinners being brought to an intereſt in the righteouſneſs of Chriſt by the virtuous exerciſes of their own hearts, as tending to flatter the pride of man, and inconſiſtent with ſalvation by free grace, is without foundation, and not according to knowledge. And they who hold that a ſinner muſt be regenerated, and brought to cleave to Chriſt by holy exerciſes of heart, in order to an intereſt in his righteouſneſs, or as a condition of this, while they prove that this has no moral worth ſufficient to recommend him in the leaſt degree, or render him leſs ill-deſerving, do preach the only doctrine, which does really, and in the higheſt degree, oppoſe the pride of man, and exalt free grace in his ſalvation.

And here it may be worth obſerving that *Sandeman* builds all his oppoſition to them who ſuppoſe that exerciſes of heart are implied

plied in faith, or that which is the condition of juſtification, on this *falſe* maxim; which is kept in ſight, and runs through all his writings. Hence, when he finds an author who aſſerts that exerciſes of heart are neceſſary in order to an intereſt in the Mediator's righteouſneſs, he at once concludes that he is ignorant of the grace of the goſpel.

On this falſe maxim alſo do the Antinomians ground their condemnation of thoſe who hold that regeneration, repentance of ſin, love to God and his law, &c. or thoſe exerciſes which imply all this, are antecedent to juſtification, being neceſſarily implied in ſaving faith. They cry out of this as a legal, phariſaical ſcheme, invented by the pride of man, and in direct oppoſition to the free juſtification of the *ungodly*. Becauſe they think when a ſinner has attained to *all this*, he has ſomething of his own, upon which he may reaſonably depend, and boaſt of it. In this Sandeman and they exactly agree, how much ſoever they may differ on ſome other points.

There are many others, who, though they think themſelves oppoſers of both theſe, yet perfectly agree with them in this point; and are careful not to let any exerciſe of heart come into ſaving faith, or take place antecedent to juſtification, leſt this ſhould eclipſe the free grace of God, and give occaſion of boaſting. All theſe are inconſiſtent with themſelves, as appears, I truſt, from what has been obſerved: For if their maxim be true, then the ſaint, who has attained to holineſs, has whereof to glory; ſo has that which is inconſiſtent with ſalvation by free grace, and is ſuited to flatter his pride. Therefore, while they are profeſſedly oppoſing the pride of man, and zealous to honour free grace, they are laying a moſt laſting foundation for pride; even the *only* foundation; and advancing that which is directly oppoſite to the exerciſe of free grace, in the ſalvation of ſinners.

The *Arminian* alſo agrees with them exactly, in this point, and builds his whole ſcheme, reſpecting the juſtification of a ſinner, upon this: Though he is herein much more conſiſtent with himſelf than they are. For he holds that the virtue of a ſinner is of ſome moral worth, ſo as to recommend him, in ſome degree at leaſt, to the divine favour: Therefore he concludes that all who come to the exerciſes of virtue, are hereby, on account of this moral worth and excellency, rendered acceptable to God, and recommended to favour. And the former have no way to oppoſe the Arminian on their own principles, but by excluding the ſinner from all virtue antecedent to his juſtification. And, for the ſame reaſon, would they be conſiſtent, they muſt exclude all virtue from the ſaint or believer, in order to prevent his boaſting: For they have not yet told us, and cannot tell, on their principles, why the virtue of a ſaint does not recommend him as much as the Arminian ſuppoſes.

But

But he who aſſerts the *infinite evil of ſin*, and conſequently, that the virtue of a *ſinner* can do nothing towards recommending him, on account of its moral worth; ſo that if he be pardoned, juſtified and ſaved, it muſt be wholly by the worthineſs and merit of Chriſt, which the moſt virtuous ſinner needs juſt as much as any other; he only keeps the line of truth, in diſtinction from all the deluded in this point, and aſſerts the *true grace of God*, and preaches the moſt humbling doctrine to a loſt world; and effectually cuts off every ſource of the pride of man. He may aſſert the neceſſity of regeneration and holy exerciſes of heart, in order to an intereſt in the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, without any danger of flattering the pride of ſinners, or giving them any ground of boaſting. Yea, the more true virtue the ſinner has, the farther he will be from boaſting; the more clearly will he ſee his own vileneſs and his infinite ill-deſert; his infinite diſtance from having any thing to recommend himſelf; the more fully will he renounce his own righteouſneſs, as no better than filthy rags, in this affair, and truſt in the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, relying upon free, ſovereign grace for pardon and ſalvation. *He* only *teſtifies the goſpel of the grace of God*, even that *true grace* wherein every believer doth ſtand. And *he only* is able to confute and overthrow the Arminian in his notion of the way of the ſinner's juſtification. And by overthrowing *this*, he at the ſame time demoliſhes the pillar on which the Antinomians, and many others, and even Sandeman himſelf, build their notion of juſtifying faith. Of ſuch importance is the doctrine of the *infinite evil of ſin!*

To leave out, or overlook this doctrine, is to ſap the very foundations of Chriſtianity. This being denied, or kept out of view, it is impoſſible that man's true character, or that of the Mediator, or the way of ſalvation by him, ſhould be underſtood. In a word, he who does not believe the infinite evil of ſin, has no juſt notion either of God, law, ſin, Mediator, atonement, juſtification, the grace of God, or of any thing that relates to the goſpel. He, in the midſt of all his zeal for *free grace*, "is PROUD, knowing nothing, doting about queſtions and ſtrifes of words, whereof cometh envy, ſtrife, railings, perverſe diſputings of men of corrupt minds, and deſtitute of the truth."

But he who fully enters into this matter, and truly and feelingly underſtands the *ſinfulneſs of ſin*, (which none do but the truly penitent and virtuous) he ſees, he *feels*, that all boaſting on this ground is forever excluded: He *ſinks down*, in a ſenſe of his own amazing vileneſs, infinite guilt, and ill-deſert; and truſts entirely to free grace through a Mediator; and deſires not to be found in his own righteouſneſs, under the notion of being recommended by it; which, if done with a diſpoſition to truſt in it, is ſo far from true virtue, that it is no better than *horrid impiety*; but that which is

through the faith of Chriſt, the righteouſneſs which is of God, by faith: And he is ready to aſcribe the *whole* of his ſalvation to free, ſovereign grace.

REVIEW OF THE REV. MR. WORCESTER'S SERMONS AND LETTERS.

Two diſcourſes on the perpetuity and proviſion of God's gracious covenant with Abraham and his ſeed. By Samuel Worceſter, A. M. paſtor of the Tabernacle Church in Salem. Second edition reviſed. To which are annexed letters to the Rev. Thomas Baldwin, D. D. on his book entitled the Baptiſm of Believers only, &c.

THE ſubject of the diſcourſes is the ancient covenant of Jehovah with his church. A ſubject, ſo important at all times, in a peculiar manner calls the attention of good men at the preſent time.

The text ſelected by Mr. Worceſter is Gal. iii. 29. *And if ye be Chriſt's, then are ye Abraham's ſeed, and heirs, according to the promiſe.* After a pertinent introduction, in which the connexion of the text is carefully explained and elucidated, this very natural and important doctrine is deduced, viz. In God's covenant of promiſe with Abraham proviſion was made for the continuance of the church formed by it, and thus for the tranſmiſſion of the privileges, and bleſſings contained in it, from generation to generation, down to the cloſe of time.

This doctrine is conſidered under two general heads.

I. That the covenant, which was made with Abraham, and by which the church was formed in his family, was intended to be perpetual, or to continue throughout all generations.

II. To ſhow more particularly what proviſion was made in the covenant for the continuance of the church, and the tranſmiſſion of the bleſſings contained in it.

The perpetuity of God's gracious covenant, its continuance under ſucceſſive diſpenſations, through all ages, is undoubtedly a doctrine of the firſt importance. On this depends the bleſſings and privileges, the comforts and hopes of the church. With this truth Mr. Worceſter ſeems deeply impreſſed, and upon it has beſtowed moſt ſerious attention.

The arguments by which he eſtabliſhes his firſt general head, he has arranged under five diſtinct topics.

1. "By the covenant made with Abraham he was conſtituted the father of all them that believe." If by virtue of the covenant Abraham is the father of all believers in every age and country, then the covenant muſt continue through every age.

2. "The

2. "The covenant eſtabliſhed with Abraham and his ſeed compriſed all the bleſſings and privileges ever promiſed to believers, and to the church."

To abrogate this covenant, therefore, would be to abrogate the grand charter of all the bleſſings, privileges and hopes of God's people. To aboliſh the church formed in the houſe of Abraham would be to aboliſh the kingdom of the Meſſiah.

3. "The covenant made with Abraham and his ſeed is the covenant of which in the New Teſtament, Chriſt is ſaid to be the Mediator, and which is deſignated as the covenant to be eſtabliſhed with the church in the days of the goſpel." This covenant with Abraham muſt, therefore, be as permanent as the goſpel church.

4. "The church under the goſpel is uniformly in the ſcriptures repreſented as being the ſame church, or a continuance of the ſame, which was formed in the family of Abraham." As a tree grafted is the ſame as before; the roots, the trunk, the tree, are the ſame; ſo the church of God is the ſame under every diſpenſation. The covenant, therefore, is perpetual.

5. "The covenant made with Abraham is expreſsly declared to be an everlaſting and perpetual covenant, a covenant to continue throughout all generations." Theſe arguments are handled at conſiderable length with a perſpicuity, a force, and perſuaſiveneſs, not common in ſubjects of this nature.

Under his SECOND general head Mr. W. undertakes to ſhow "what was the proviſion made in the Abrahamic covenant for the continuance of the church formed by it, and the tranſmiſſion of the bleſſings contained in it." This proviſion is found, he ſuppoſes, in the two grand promiſes variouſly expreſſed and at different times unfolded, "I will be a God unto thee and to thy ſeed after thee." And, "in thy ſeed ſhall all the nations of the earth be bleſſed."

"The promiſe or propoſal of God to Abraham was to be a God, not only to *him*, but to his *ſeed*. The ſame was his promiſe to Iſaac, the ſame to Jacob, and ſo down from generation to generation. In this line of natural deſcent were the bleſſings of the covenant to be tranſmitted." Not that *all*, who were children according to the fleſh, were certainly heirs of *all* covenant bleſſings; but the children of the *promiſe*, thoſe who ſhould truly in faith be given to God, and brought up for him, were to be counted for the ſeed. Grace ſhould be given ſo that a holy ſeed ſhould be preſerved from generation to generation in the church. While the promiſe of the covenant had *primary* reſpect to Abraham's natural poſterity, yet Abraham was made the father of *many* nations. "In him and in his ſeed all the families of the *earth* ſhould be bleſſed." Though the church was to be continued in the line of natural deſcent, yet proviſion was made for the adoption, incorporation, or ingrafting of other individuals, families and nations.

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Under the former diſpenſation "ſtrangers" of different nations were admitted to the privileges of Iſraelites; on the introduction of the goſpel diſpenſation Gentile believers by hundreds, and thouſands, and myriads, were admitted to the ſame covenant, and became fellow heirs, and of the ſame body, and partakers of the ſame promiſe in Chriſt by the goſpel." Gueſts, before invited, were excluded from the ſociety, and new ones were admitted. Old branches were broken off, and new ones grafted in. Such has been, ſuch is the church, and ſo it will continue.

Such is a brief view of what Mr. W. has given as "the proviſion of the covenant."

In the *Improvement* Mr. Worceſter firſt leads us "to a grateful and devout contemplation of the great deſigns, the gradual progreſs, and the ultimate extenſion and glory of the church of God." He next ſhows that the gracious covenant of God is never in reality *eſtabliſhed* with any but true believers; in the *third* place he infers the "high and everlaſting importance of a cordial and obedient belief in all which God has promiſed" in this covenant.

Having thus prepared the way Mr. W. infers 4thly, "that for believing parents to give up their children to God in baptiſm is a great and important duty."

Under this inference it is ſhown, that as the ancient covenant and church of God were continued under the preſent diſpenſation, and as baptiſm has now by divine appointment taken the place of circumciſion, it therefore follows, concluſively, that as children were anciently admitted to the ſeal of the covenant in the form of circumciſion, ſo they are now to be admitted to the ſame ſeal in the form of baptiſm. This inference, ſo evident and concluſive, Mr. W. ſtrengthens by collateral proofs from the New Teſtament, and by a hiſtorical view of the practice in the firſt ages of the church. With earneſtneſs and Chriſtian zeal he thus enforces the duty.

Next follows a reflection concerning the *mode* of baptiſm, in which by arguments irreſiſtible he ſhows, that ſprinkling is valid and ſcriptural.

In the remaining part of the improvement he ſtrongly enforces the ſerious duty of every church reſpecting their baptiſed children. He gives an impreſſive view of God's infinite wiſdom and grace, manifeſted in his covenant with the church, and forcibly urges all, who are ſet for the defence of the goſpel, to maintain the ſpirit and principles of this gracious covenant.

After the firſt publication of Mr. Worceſter's ſermons, Dr. Baldwin publiſhed a book in which he was pretty free with his remarks on Mr. Worceſter's ſermons. This led Mr. W. to reply in a number of Letters. The moſt material things which have the name or ſemblance of argument in the Dr.'s book, Mr. W. has arranged under their proper heads; he has examined them with patience, and confuted them by ſound arguments. By this he has

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alſo ſtrengthened, and if poſſible more completely eſtabliſhed the doctrine of his two diſcourſes.

In his ſtrictures upon the two diſcourſes, Dr. B. attempts to ſet up a diſtinction between a covenant ſuppoſed to be made with Abraham, "when he was called to leave his country and kindred, to go and ſojourn in a ſtrange land," and what he chooſes to call "the covenant of circumciſion." He fully admits that the great promiſe made to Abraham at the time of his call was the goſpel, as then preached, and compriſed the Meſſiah and all the bleſſings of his kingdom; but he denies, that that promiſe was compriſed in the covenant afterwards made with Abraham and his ſeed, and ſealed with the ſign of circumciſion. Hence he concludes that Mr. W. had totally miſtaken the promiſe contained in his text, that his text does not ſupport his doctrine, and that his diſcourſes are without foundation. He might as well have ſaid, that becauſe the top of a ſpire is not *gold*, therefore the foundation of the temple is *ſand*. It ſhows that a man is not a good compoſer of ſermons, if his text does not contain his doctrine; but it does not prove the doctrine may not be *true:* but even this ground on which Dr. Baldwin erects his citadel is found untenable. Mr. Worceſter fairly ſecures his text, ſhows there is no ſuch diſtinction of covenants, but that all the gracious promiſes made to Abraham were included in the covenant, eſtabliſhed with him and his ſeed, when he received the ſign of circumciſion. Mr. W. has done this by again conſidering the connexion of the text; by a luminous recurrence to the firſt promiſe of grace in Paradiſe, ſuppoſed to be for ſubſtance the ſame with the great promiſe made to Abraham, and the ſure foundation of the church; by a ſolemn and impreſſive review of God's covenant tranſactions with Abraham; by a cloſe and particular ſurvey of the covenant itſelf, comparing it with many important paſſages in the Old and New Teſtament, and by a victorious expoſure of the antipedobaptiſt conſtruction of the *one ſeed, which is Chriſt*. Theſe, in their order, make the ſubjects of his "Letters," from the ſecond to the ſeventh, inclusive.

Having proved, beyond all controverſy, that all the gracious promiſes made to Abraham, and particularly the great goſpel promiſe, "In thee and thy ſeed ſhall all the nations of the earth be bleſſed," were included in the covenant by which the church was formed in his family, Mr. W. proceeds in his eighth letter to ſhow that according to Dr. B.'s own conceſſion the antipedobaptiſt theory muſt fall. The ninth letter, on the ſeal of the righteouſneſs of faith, ſhows the fallacy of Dr. B.'s ſcheme. In the tenth and eleventh letters, the antipedobaptiſt views of the Abrahamic covenant, as containing only temporal bleſſings, and being only of temporary continuance, are expoſed in a ſolemn and affecting manner.

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In the three following letters, the oneneſs of the Pre-Chriſtian and Poſt-Chriſtian church is largely conſidered and maintained. This eſſential point in his ſyſtem, Mr. W. has defended and eſtabliſhed with a minuteneſs, a patience, and a ſeries of proofs, that do honour to his able pen: Dr. B.'s arguments, and aſſertions, and exclamations, dwindle into puerilities, or riſe into dangerous abſurdities. Mr. W. gives a very intereſting view of the ancient church, its conſtitution and deſign, its privileges and bleſſings, the qualifications of its members, and its ſameneſs with the Chriſtian church. The idea of two churches, a Hebrew and Chriſtian, is ſhown to be abſurd, and highly injurious to the honour of religion and the cauſe of God.

The two following letters are upon the queſtion whether baptiſm has come in the place of circumciſion. Dr. B.'s objections are refuted, and the doctrine eſtabliſhed.

The ſeventeenth letter gives a diſtinct notation of ſeveral important points ſuppoſed to have been illuſtrated and proved in the preceding letters.

1. "That the covenant, of which circumciſion was the token and ſeal, included all the great and precious promiſes ever made in Chriſt to the church.

2. That God's covenant with the church has always been *eſſentially* the ſame, though unfolded with increaſing clearneſs under ſeveral ſucceſſive diſpenſations.

3. That the church of God has been but *one*, and will be but *one*, from the time when Eve was ſtyled the mother of all living, until its final conſummation in glory.

4. That under the preſent diſpenſation baptiſm holds the ſame place, which circumciſion held under the ancient.

Theſe ſeveral points (ſays the author) I have endeavoured to eſtabliſh by clear and abundant ſcripture proof; your objections and arguments againſt them it has been my aim fairly to meet and anſwer. The general concluſions from the whole may be expreſſed in two particulars.

1. Children now hold the ſame covenant relation to the church, which they anciently held. The church is the ſame; the covenant the ſame; the promiſes the ſame. Therefore,

2. The infants of the church are now as proper ſubjects for the *ſeal* of the covenant in the form of baptiſm, as anciently they were for the ſame ſeal in the form of circumciſion. Their covenant relation to the church is the ſame; the nature and import of the ſeal are the ſame."

In the two ſucceeding letters, Mr. W.'s views concerning the *terms* of the covenant are diſtinctly ſtated and ſupported againſt the objections of Dr. B.

In the twentieth letter, the ſtatement given in a note of the diſcourſes reſpecting the teſtimony of the primitive fathers in favour

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of infant baptiſm is fairly vindicated againſt the objections of different Baptiſt writers.

The 21ſt letter learnedly and ably ſupports *infant* baptiſm. The next carefully, and we think ſucceſsfully, eſtabliſhes the *mode* of baptiſm.

The 23d letter repels the charges of Dr. B. in a manly and diſpaſſionate ſtyle, which, if arguments or facts could avail, we ſhould think would go far towards making the Doctor repent that he is an author. The laſt letter, which conſiders the high claims and pretenſions of the Baptiſts, is a ſeries of pathetic expoſtulations, in a ſtrain of impreſſive eloquence.

Concerning the *manner* in which Mr. Worceſter has executed his work, we have little to add. His ſtyle is correct, perſpicuous, forcible, and harmonious. The ſpirit of the work is ſerious. He never wanders from his ſubject, is never dull; but often is animated, and like a mighty wind bears down all before him. A tender concern for divine truth, and deep ſolicitude for the welfare of true religion, is manifeſted through the whole work, which muſt recommend it to every candid reader.

Selections.

COMPARISON BETWEEN ATHEISM AND UNIVERSALISM, WITH REGARD TO THEIR MORAL TENDENCY.

ATHEISM promiſes its votaries an exemption from all evils after death; and that all, of whatever character, ſhall equally ſink into an eternal ſleep. The doctrine of *univerſal ſalvation* promiſes to all, of whatever character in this life, endleſs felicity—an eternal weight of glory.

That *Atheiſm* tends to give the reigns to the luſts of men, and to diſſolve all moral ties, cannot be denied. When all ſenſe of accountableneſs to an infinitely juſt Being, from whom nothing can poſſibly be concealed, and out of whoſe hands no one can eſcape, is taken away, it is evident, that the principal reſtraints, under which mankind in general are holden in this life, are removed.

The doctrine of univerſal ſalvation equally frees men from fears of future evil; at leaſt any, which ſhall not be accompanied or followed with an infinitely overbalancing good. Some of the advocates for this doctrine deny, that there will be any future puniſhment whatever; and all of them, that there will be any more than

than a temporary one; and this to be followed by a ſtate of endleſs felicity; for the higher and more ſenſible enjoyment of which, men will be fitted by the temporary pains which, it is admitted, ſome may be made to ſuffer after death.

Atheiſm and Univerſaliſm agree in this, that no evil, *on the whole*, is to be feared by any, after death; for thoſe temporary pains, which are neceſſary to prepare the ſubject for higher enjoyment, and which are to be followed with an *eternal weight of glory*, are not to be conſidered, *on the whole*, as evils. The latter ſentiment, then, promiſes an endleſs, everlaſting good to men of every deſcription and character; while the former encourages no better hope, than that of an eternal ſleep, an exemption from all future pain.

Which of theſe ſentiments bids faireſt to engage the affections of the carnal heart, can admit of no diſpute. For it is eaſy to ſee, that a ſtate of endleſs felicity, and *that*, with all the pains which may ever be expected from a Being, whoſe ſingle and higheſt object is the complete and endleſs happineſs of every individual of his creatures, is greatly preferable, yea, infinitely ſo, to a total ceſſation of exiſtence.

The doctrine of Univerſaliſm, eſpecially as denying *any* future puniſhment whatever, muſt gain an unſpeakable preference, in the carnal mind, to the gloomy doctrine of annihilation. The Univerſaliſt has every advantage which the Atheiſt can boaſt, without any of the diſadvantages neceſſarily attendant on the principles of the latter. The atheiſtical doctrine promiſes nothing more than a mere exemption from pain, after a life of pleaſure, and the indulgence of every luſt: while that of the advocates for univerſal ſalvation, in addition to deliverance from every laſh of punitive juſtice, begets the hope of future glorious rewards, and unceaſing felicity. Which of theſe doctrines, then, gives the reigns moſt entirely to the luſts of men, at the ſame time moſt effectually removing all thoſe reſtraints of fear, which are of ſuch vaſt importance in preſerving the peace and order of ſociety, no man in his ſenſes can be at a loſs.

Whoever would moſt effectually remove all the barriers of civil ſociety, and open every floodgate of iniquity, let him preach up the certainty of the final ſalvation of all men, whatever may be their moral character and conduct in this world. And, as far as this doctrine ſhall be believed, the greateſt reſtraints under which wicked men were ever laid, will be quite removed and taken away.

On the other hand, let all thoſe who are friends, not only to the ſouls of men, but to the peace and welfare of civil ſociety, cultivate the belief, and continually act under the influence of that ſolemn and intereſting truth, often taught by the great Saviour of men, that, except we repent, we ſhall all periſh.

PARLOUR

PARLOUR PREACHING.

EUSEBIUS, who when he hears of any calamity amongſt the people of his charge, never waits to be ſent for, went to pay a viſit at a houſe, where, until lately, no ſound was to be heard, but that of gaiety and mirth: but death had now entered in a very ſudden and awful manner; and not content with one victim, ceaſed not his ravages, until three blooming youths, within the ſhort ſpace of one year, were levelled with the duſt.

This family had, for a long time, been unuſually free from afflictive viſitations; and, infatuated by uninterrupted proſperity, God and eternity were forgotten, whilſt amuſements, falſely called innocent, had uſurped the place of family inſtruction and devotion, and had even encroached upon the ſacred hours of the Sabbath.

At any time previous to theſe awful ſtrokes of Divine Providence, a viſit from Euſebius would have appeared like an intruſion, as it would have interrupted ſome favourite amuſement; but now he was more welcome than any of the numerous train of cuſtomary viſitants, who, although they were deeply affected by the recent events which had occurred in the family, were poorly qualified to adminiſter conſolation to the bereaved parents. The firſt emotions of grief, under ſuch afflicting diſpenſations, are commonly too ſtrong to be reſiſted; and the ſuffering ſoul is rather irritated than ſoothed, by officious attempts to alleviate its anguiſh. Euſebius, aware of this, did no more on his firſt viſit than ſympathiſe with the relatives of the deceaſed, who appeared to be overwhelmed with the profoundeſt grief. But on the ſecond viſit, he found them more compoſed, and therefore he proceeded to make ſuch obſervations as he thought might be uſeful, both in relieving their anguiſh, and in leading them to a proper improvement of the painful viſitation of the Almighty. The father of the family was a man of good underſtanding, and poſſeſſed of a conſiderable ſhare of natural firmneſs; but theſe ſucceſſive ſtrokes were too much for his philoſophy, and the ſtrength of his nerves united, to enable him to bear. His unſucceſsful efforts to ſuſtain the ſhock, only ſerved to give more manifeſt evidence of his weakneſs. At firſt he remained profoundly ſilent, and although he liſtened attentively to the diſcourſe of Euſebius, yet he returned no anſwer to any of his obſervations. At length, however, his ſwelling grief would have vent, and he exclaimed, "I am the moſt miſerable of men! Attempt not to comfort me. I ſeem to be ſet up as a mark for the arrows of divine vengeance. The cup of my affliction is full; I can ſuffer no more. The Almighty has blaſted all my proſpects, and my peace of mind can never be reſtored. But why he has choſen to pour out the vials of

his wrath upon me, I know not. I am a ſinner, it is true, but not worſe than others who ſuffer none of theſe calamities. As *he* has taken from me the comforts of my life, and the expected props of my declining years, let him add one ſtroke more, and deſtroy me alſo. I deſire to live no longer. The world is turned into a howling wilderneſs to me. It is impoſſible that any thing ſhould now afford me conſolation. O! my children! my children!"

The fulneſs of his heart here obſtructed his utterance, and Euſebius thought that it was time to interpoſe; he therefore obſerved, "that the affliction was great, and that grief was natural; and provided it did not lead us to entertain hard thoughts of God, or excite in us a murmuring or diſcontented diſpoſition, was forbidden neither by reaſon nor revelation. But," ſaid he, "beware, my friend, leſt, in the anguiſh of your ſpirit, and in the bitterneſs of your ſorrow, you raſhly charge the providence of God, with injuſtice in his dealings towards you. Remember, that your caſe is not peculiar. Similar afflictions are ſent upon thouſands; and it is not the moſt wicked and abandoned of the human race only, who are thus dealt with, but as frequently thoſe who lead lives of exemplary piety. Conſider alſo, that although your loſs is incalculably great, the Sovereign of the univerſe has taken nothing but what he had a right to take. All comforts are his gifts, and are beſtowed only for a time. He may, without injuſtice, recal them when he pleaſes. Therefore, although from the principles of our nature, we cannot repreſs our ſorrow when our deareſt relatives are ſnatched away by death, yet we have no reaſon to accuſe the Almighty, who gives and takes according to the counſel of his own will, and is not bound to render to his creatures any account of his proceedings. Beſides, let us conſider whether our ſins have not deſerved all, and much more than we ſuffer. You think it hard that you ſhould be puniſhed more ſeverely than many others who are at leaſt as great ſinners as yourſelf. But if you ſuffer no more than you deſerve, there is no injuſtice in the dealings of God towards you. And with reſpect to others, their time may not yet be come. They may have to paſs through afflictions as great as yours. But if all were now enduring calamities like yours, it would very little lighten your burden. Theſe painful occurrences may be intended, as they are calculated, to iſſue in real bleſſings. A righteous God may be leaving others to ſuffer the juſt puniſhment of their ſins in another world, whilſt he may be uſing theſe means to purge you from your ſins here, that you may eſcape future puniſhment. Many ſouls, now in glory, owe their ſalvation, under God, to ſevere and heart-rending afflictions.

The goodneſs of God has long been tried upon you; uninterrupted proſperity has attended your ſteps ever ſince you had a family, until the preſent year; but what effect it has produced it is your part to conſider. I may, however, without offence, ſuggeſt, that

that you have not made returns to your kind Benefactor, in any proportion to his merciful dealings towards you and your family. Permit me to be plain with you. You have had a religious education, and in your early years were privileged with the inſtructions and example of an excellent father, the ſavour of whoſe name is ſtill precious in this place, and the memory of whoſe pious and charitable acts will be long kept up among the children of want and diſtreſs. Now, although the courſe of your life has not been ſuch, as, in the language of the world, is called *vicious*, yet it has been far removed from ſerious piety. It has been according to the courſe and faſhion of this world, to which we are forbidden to be conformed, and very little regulated by the principles and precepts of the goſpel of Chriſt. The pious uſages and cuſtoms of your father's houſe have been neglected or forſaken; the reading of the ſcriptures, the ſinging of pſalms, and offering up prayers to God, have been excluded, to make room for the card-table and a whole train of ſeductive amuſements, which have received the ſanction of a gay world. The houſe of God you have almoſt deſerted. It ſeems to have been your chief ambition to live ſplendidly, to mingle with the great, and to ſecure the eſteem of thoſe who are reckoned honourable on earth; whilſt the favour of God, and the honour which comes from above, you have neglected to ſeek: and as you have permitted me to proceed ſo far, I will yet go farther. Theſe children, whoſe untimely end you now deplore with ſuch bitterneſs of grief, I well recollect, you ſolemnly dedicated to God in baptiſm, and promiſed to bring up *in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.* The nature of this tranſaction you probably did not conſider at the time. You entered into it as a matter of form, a thing of courſe; but this, inſtead of extenuating, rather aggravates your ſin. Such trifling with the ſacred inſtitutions of Heaven cannot eſcape the diſpleaſure of the juſt Judge of all the earth. However careleſs and indifferent you were on the occaſion, the obligations you were under were ſtill ſacredly binding. Have you then fulfilled your duty to your offſpring? Have they been diligently nurtured and inſtructed in the ſchool of Chriſt? Have they been admoniſhed, reſtrained, encouraged, and ſtimulated upon Chriſtian principles? I forbear to preſs this inquiry. It is calculated to give riſe to painful reflections. Your children were educated, I know, with great care; but I muſt ſay, that I fear religion had but little place in the ſyſtem in which they were inſtructed. Early initiated into all the follies of a gay and corrupt world, they were taught to believe, that to *make a figure*, and ſhine in the eyes of men, was the moſt deſirable object. You need not, therefore, be aſtoniſhed, that a juſt and holy God has expreſſed his diſpleaſure at your conduct. It may be in mercy that he has taken your children away. He has removed them from the evils to which they were daily expoſed. And with regard to yourſelf, you

ſhould

ſhould conſider theſe diſpenſations as intended to open your eyes upon the ſin and folly of your former courſe, and to reclaim you from the dangerous paths which you have hitherto purſued.

You conſider your afflictions too great to admit of conſolation; but be aſſured that that holy religion in which you were educated, but which you have ſo long neglected, contains ſources of comfort ſufficient to alleviate the keeneſt anguiſh to which human nature is ſubject. In the days of your proſperity, you ſaw no neceſſity for religion: it appeared to be rather calculated to diſturb your peace, than to increaſe your enjoyments. But now, whatever you may think of Chriſtianity, you feel the need of ſomething which the world cannot afford. The wealth, which you have amaſſed with unceaſing care and unremitting toil, and for the ſake of which you neglected your God and your ſoul, can now bring you no comfort. Your pretext for ſuch unwearied exertion was, that you had children for whom it was your duty to provide a decent livelihood; but God, in the unſearchable diſpenſation of his providence, has taken them away. They now want nothing of all which you have been ſo long treaſuring up for their uſe: How clearly then may you ſee the vanity of placing your affections on theſe ſublunary objects! You ſee now, that ſomething is neceſſary to conſtitute happineſs beſides the wealth and friendſhip of this world. I beſeech you, therefore, to exerciſe your unbiaſſed reaſon a little on this ſubject, and be convinced, notwithſtanding all your former prejudices, that the favour and friendſhip of God is the moſt neceſſary and deſirable of all poſſeſſions. Reflect now, with impartiality, upon the ſcene of worldly proſperity through which you have paſſed, and carefully examine what degree of real ſatisfaction you enjoyed in theſe things. You profeſſed to view the ſerious Chriſtian and humble penitent with pity; becauſe, as you ſaid, they deprived themſelves of the principal pleaſures of life, and doomed themſelves voluntarily to miſery: But are you not now convinced, that theſe mourning ſaints, whoſe heads hung down like the bulruſh, were much happier than you were in the midſt of noiſy mirth, or in the acquiſition of wealth and fame? You know that you were not at eaſe, even when the countenance aſſumed the appearance of ſatisfaction and contentment. You were always conſcious of a ſecret flaw in your happineſs. You could not avoid feeling the gnawings of an inward worm at the root of all your comforts. And after your greateſt exertions to be happy, and even when, for a ſeaſon, you deceived yourſelf into the opinion that you were happy, what an uneaſy vacuity ſucceeded all your pleaſures! What a liſtleſs langour and inſupportable depreſſion! much more difficult to be borne, than a conſiderable degree of acute pain!

If theſe things ſtrike you as they do me, I know not how you can avoid perceiving the propriety and neceſſity of a new courſe of life. Believe me, Sir, you are now arrived at a critical period

of

of your exiſtence. Much depends upon the effect which this viſitation of God ſhall produce on your mind. I hope, and earneſtly pray, that, by the grace of God, it may be rendered effectual to wean your affections from the world, and to lead you to ſeek an intereſt in the favour of God! The remarks which I have made may appear to you to be ſevere; but I aſſure you they have been dictated by a ſincere and tender concern for your eternal welfare. I have indeed ſaid more than I at firſt intended, encouraged by the patient attention which I perceive you have given to my obſervations. But now I muſt bid you adieu, hoping, that, by the time I ſee you again, theſe ſubjects will have been viewed by you in a more correct light than heretofore."

Euſebius roſe up to take his leave, but his afflicted pariſhioner ſeized him by the hand, and entreated him to prolong his viſit; "for," ſaid he, "although I have been agitated with various ſtrong feelings of pride and reſentment, whilſt you were ſpeaking, yet, upon the whole, I have been benefited by your obſervations. I do ſee the vanity of the world in a clearer light than ever before. And I confeſs, that I ſee more things wrong in my own conduct, than I ever thought of before. But why do you entertain ſuch an unfavourable opinion of me? You ſeem to think that I am the vileſt of wretches. If I could believe that I was as culpable as you have repreſented me to be, I ſhould deſpiſe and abhor myſelf, and conſider myſelf as unfit to live upon the earth." Euſebius anſwered, that he did not conſider him as worſe than other worldly men, but that the effects which he had mentioned, would certainly follow from a clear view of his own ſins; "and, Sir," ſaid he, "I am ſo far from thinking that ſuch effects would be undeſirable, that I ſhould conſider them as the beginning of a reformation. And that you may not ſuppoſe that I am fond of repreſenting other men's ſins to be great, whilſt I think my own to be venial, I will confeſs to you, that my bad opinion of human nature is taken from a knowledge of the evils of my own heart and life. Thoſe very views and feelings, which you ſo much deprecate in regard to yourſelf, I have experienced to my humiliation. I have ſeen my own character to be ſo vile in the ſight of God, that I have actually abhorred myſelf, and reckoned myſelf unworthy to tread on the earth, or breathe the air: but although theſe feelings were painful and extremely mortifying, I would not for the world have been without them. Had I remained free from an experience of this ſort, I ſhould never have felt the need, nor known the worth, of a crucified Saviour. But to know him, to prize his atonement, and to be delighted with his character, is now all my hope and all my joy. As you are pleaſed to receive my remarks, on the whole, with ſo much candour, I do not feel a freedom to leave you, as I was going to do, till I have aſked you, if it be not your wiſh that we ſhould unite together in prayer, that God would

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sanctify this affliction to you and your family, and support you under it." The proposal was readily embraced. The voice of fervent prayer was heard in a house to which it had before been a stranger. After which Eusebius departed.

BETHESDA.

"Receive the blessing and adore the grace,
That threw in this *Bethesda* your disease.
If unrestor'd by this, despair your cure." YOUNG.

WHEN our Lord, as "the light of the world," had anointed with clay, the eyes of a blind man, he instructed him to go and wash, not in the pool of Bethesda, but in Siloam. Had he sent him to Bethesda, the Jews might have ascribed the cure, not to the power of Christ, but to the healing quality of the waters. But whence, it may be asked, was this quality derived? The scripture states, that an angel descended, at a certain season, and troubled the water. The hypothesis that Bethesda was the receptacle of the blood of the sacrifices, and that the high priest occasionally commissioned a messenger (or angel) to stir and trouble the water, imparting by this mean a virtue, which, in the sight of the heathen, served to honour the oblations of Moses, although introduced by so respectable an authority as Dr. Hammond, has found, and may be expected to find, few supporters. Dr. Doddridge, with considerable probability, supposes, that this pool might be remarkable for some mineral attending the water, and that this circumstance, together with its proximity to the temple, where, for religious purposes, a bath was so desirable, may account for stately porches raised around it. An extraordinary motion had been observed in the water, and, by the direction of Providence, some diseased persons entering, found an instant and unexpected cure. At subsequent commotions, similar effects might follow. These the Jews probably ascribed to some angelic power, as they afterwards attributed a voice from heaven.

At what period this sanative turbulence commenced and subsided, cannot be ascertained. It appears to have occurred only during the ministry of Jesus Christ; nothing is heard of its extraordinary virtues before or after that period. The design of this miracle appears to have been to honour the name, testify the Messiahship, and present an emblem of the healing power of our Lord and Saviour. In relation to this last idea, the following reflections on the pool of Bethesda are suggested.

Man is a creature diseased. In a moral view, he is "blind, lame, halt and withered," and exposed to eternal death. He is the subject of an entire incapacity of self-relief. Like the multi-

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tude round the water, he lies prostrate and is impotent. Whatsoever of reliance his bosom cherishes, it is not on the Lord, but in an arm of flesh. If he remain diseased, it is because he sees *no man* to put him in the pool. It is true, the afflicted at Bethesda, were, in comparison of the whole human race, but few; while sin has dishonoured and infected all mankind. The man, whose cure our Lord produced, had indeed been thirty and eight years in that case; but, if a man live twice that period, he will remain morally diseased, unless the grace of Christ restore him. Few could have passed the cloisters of Bethesda, without dropping the tear of tender commiseration; but alas! how few lay to heart the deplorable condition of themselves, and of their fellow creatures!

It is thine, O wondrous pool! to discover to our astonished and grateful observance, the efficacy of a Saviour's grace. Thy *name* is significant. *Bethesda!* it is *the house of mercy*. Destitute of merit, and sunk in an abyss of guilt and impurity, a sinner's salvation is "not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy." Thy *situation* is significant. From "Jerusalem" the word of the Lord went forth in the ministry of the apostles, and the churches of Christ remain the seats of spiritual healing. Thy sheep market, O Bethesda! shall teach me the necessity of an atonement, and the worth of that lovely object who "was led as a lamb to the slaughter." I will learn, as I gaze on thy agitated wave, the necessity of foreign agency in a sinner's deliverance. The sick on thy margin, the priests and the people of Jerusalem, might have disturbed thy surface; but could never have communicated a medical power. A messenger from heaven must descend, or man must perish. I see the troubling of the pool is not sufficient for restoration; the blind and the lame must *step in*. Into the waters of life, in the exercise of a living faith, may I be assisted to pass. The efficacy of Bethesda, which healed the afflicted of "whatsoever disease he had," shall encourage my flight. O may it animate the flight of thousands to that precious blood "which cleanseth us from *all* sin!"

But O how insufficient the pool to display the full glories of the Redeemer! Bethesda could relieve only at "a certain season;" Christ is "the same yesterday, to-day and forever." His accepted time is *now*. He only, who *first* stepped in, was healed; but Paul with triumph assures us, that "for this cause he obtained mercy, that Christ Jesus in him *first* might show forth all long suffering, for an example to them that should afterwards believe." A sick man, wearied with delay, might leave the porticoes of Bethesda and find relief in Jerusalem, or in other places. Our Lord himself gave strength to the man who had an infirmity, without his entering the pool. He said, rise, take up thy bed and walk, and he did so; but there is "no other name given under heaven, whereby we can be saved," except the name of Christ. The virtues of Bethesda

theſda were tranſient, but not ſo the virtues of Jeſus. He continues to appear as though newly ſlain. The ſaint is permitted to ſing,

Dear dying Lamb, thy precious blood
Shall never loſe its power,
Till all the ranſom'd church of God
Be ſav'd to ſin no more.

Only ſome who came to the pool obtained relief. It is probable many were left to die in the porches, in ſight of the water; but none that have applied to Chriſt for ſalvation, have been ever rejected. His gracious invitation is, "Whoſoever will, let him come and take of the water of life freely."

REFLECTIONS OF A SOLDIER.

"ABOUT fourteen months ago, as I was one night on ſentry, I believe in the hours from ten to twelve, in a place extremely ſolitary, walking on my poſt to and fro, while reflecting on the goodneſs and mercy of God towards me, my hard heart was melted down into contrition and ſorrow for ſin. O bleſſed, bleſſed moment! While I was muſing, the fire of love to God kindled in my breaſt, and the candle of the Lord ſhone round my head. For a few moments, I was almoſt loſt in admiration, I ſcarcely knew whether I was in the body or out of the body. I believe I had my Saviour's preſence with me.

"During the two hours I felt myſelf in ſuch a frame that I could give myſelf up into the hands of the Lord. While his love was ſhed abroad in my heart, I ſaid, "if thou haſt any meſſage for any place, *ſend me.*" I thought I could go any where, or ſuffer any thing for Chriſt, ſeeing he had done ſuch great things for me. My mind was particularly anxious about going to India, to join the dear brethren, in publiſhing the glad tidings of ſalvation through a crucified Saviour to the poor Hindoos. On reading, ſoon after, that the Lord had taken ſeveral of his miſſionary ſervants, who had gone thither, to himſelf, my heart was filled with ſorrow. Reflection, nevertheleſs, taught me that the Lord is righteous in all his ways and holy in all his works. While pondering on theſe myſterious providences, O, thought I, what would I give were I only capable of filling up one of their places; what would I give! did I ſay? I would, could I command them, relinquiſh ten thouſand worlds, and count them but dung and droſs for the ineſtimable privilege. "O, my deareſt Jeſus, I long to ſee thy kingdom come and thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. I long to ſee the empire of Satan in ruin, and that of Jeſus in power and glory. O how I long

To tell to dying ſinners round,
What a dear Saviour I have found!"

A MISTAKE

A MISTAKE CORRECTED.

WE often hear it ſaid, that "the children of good people are commonly as bad as any." This is a palpable falſehood. On the contrary the church has been principally kept up, in every age, from the ſeed of the faithful. A miniſter of the goſpel, who had ſerved the ſame congregation for nearly half a century, once aſſured the writer, that three fourths of the communicants then in his church were, to his knowledge, the children of communicants; and yet the half of his congregation probably had never been communicants. There are, however, a number (and taken collectively a very conſiderable number) of the moſt profligate and abandoned of men, who are the offspring of the moſt eminent ſaints. What, then, does this diſpenſation teach us? On the one hand, it plainly and forcibly teaches the duty and advantage of religious inſtruction and education, and God's favour to his people in anſwering their prayers in bleſſings on their deſcendants. On the other hand, it not only teaches the divine ſovereignty in chooſing its own ſubjects for grace and glory, but alſo that true religion does not depend on the natural conſtitution either of body or mind; becauſe thoſe who derive ſuch conſtitution from their parents are ſometimes totally different from and oppoſite to them in moral qualities, and in devout diſpoſitions and pious habits. It teaches, in a word, that the children of God are "born not of blood, nor of the will of the fleſh, nor of the will of man, but of God."

ANECDOTES.

ARISTIPPUS the Socratic philoſopher was accuſtomed to ſay, that "*Parents ſhould poſſeſs their children of ſuch valuables as might eſcape with them from a ſhipwreck.*" Stilpon, another philoſopher, when the city in which he lived was ſacked by Demetrius, being aſked what loſs he had ſuſtained, anſwered, "*None, I carry my all with me.*" To each of theſe circumſtances Dr. Doddridge delicately alludes in one of his hymns.

Engage this roving treach'rous heart,
To fix on Mary's better part;
To ſcorn the trifles of a day,
For joys that none can take away.
Then let the wildeſt ſtorms arise;
Let tempeſts mingle earth and ſkies;
No fatal ſhipwreck ſhall I fear,
But *all my treaſures with me bear.*

NATHANIEL BRADSHAW, B. D. of Trinity College, Cambridge, ejected from his living at Willingham, for his conscientious adherence to evangelical truth, was succeeded by a profane minister, whose name was Nailor. Dr. Bradshaw was interred in Willingham church. When the sexton was digging the grave for Nailor, a person, who was looking on, exclaimed, "Why do you bury him so near that fanatic?" An aged person, who was present, and who knew their different characters, shrewdly answered, "*It cannot affect them while they lie here, and they may be* FAR ENOUGH OFF at the resurrection."

THE great John Howe of Oxford was at dinner with a certain nobleman, who treated Mr. Howe with great respect, and requested him to say in what manner he could effectually serve him, strengthening his protestations of zeal, with a multitude of profane oaths. Mr. Howe replied, "There is one favour which I should be happy your lordship would grant me." "My good Mr. Howe," replied the nobleman impatiently, with another oath, "there is nothing Mr. Howe can ask but it will make me happy to grant." On which Mr. Howe calmly said, "The only favour, my lord, which I have to beg of you is, that your lordship will give me leave to swear the next oath."

Religious Intelligence.

UNITED STATES.

Letter from the Rev. Gideon Blackburn, to the Rev. Dr. Green.

Dear Sir,

MARYVILLE, JAN. 2, 1808.

A FEW days since I had an opportunity of seeing the effect of civilization on my scholars. Death had executed his commission on an old man, who was connected with some of the scholars. James M'Intosh, one of the oldest and most advanced of my school, undertook the ceremony of his funeral rites. He took his own shirt, overalls, and stockings—laid out the corpse decently, washed, shaved, and dressed it neatly—placed a candle by it, and himself and his fellow scholars took their seats around it in decent order, and passed the night in reading, singing, and serious conversation. He had a fashionable coffin made, and a grave dug in common form. At a suitable time they formed a procession, and carried the corpse to the place of interment. Just as they were about to set out for the grave, a white man, who was present, proposed that they should put the corpse into a cart. "No!" said M'Intosh, "we shall not show such disrespect for the dead." Four of them, therefore, carried the bier, moved to the place with solemnity, performed the last offices of friendship

ship with a gravity becoming Christians, and with minds penetrated with the expectation of a future resurrection, (a subject which had been canvassed amongst them) returned with composure to their former employ. This was done without the aid or counsel of any but themselves. The Bible and their education have produced this effect, and will soon give a regulation to the taste of the nation. The doctrine of the resurrection has been often mentioned, in order to inspire them with proper sentiments in regard to the dead; and by many of the nations it is pretty well understood. After a long conversation with one of the principal chiefs, respecting death and the resurrection, he paused in solemn silence for a while, and then with a significant smile, as if pleased with the discovery, "Oh!" said he, "I understand it. It is just like a snake in the spring, which leaves its old skin and goes away new." Their ideas are usually expressed by allusions to nature, as was practised in the eastern world. There are very few doctrines but I can explain by the help of the interpreters I have made in the school, who, by reading in the Bible, are familiar with the truths I wish to state.

Sabbath, a week, I spent between two and three hours in stating to a chief, the nature of the moral law, the ten commandments, and showed that they were equally binding on all, red, white, and black—that the miseries of mankind arose from disobeying those precepts—that conscience was wounded, and the great Spirit was angry—that this was what made one people go to war with another, which they ought not to do, being all brothers—that this was the cause why they removed from each other, became strangers to one another, and by it forgot their God—that many white people continued in that way, and were called *bad*—that those were the ones with whom they had been most acquainted—that some white people were ashamed of such conduct, were sorry at their heart, and wished all others to become like themselves; that to cure this disobedience and give pardon to the offenders, the Son of the great Spirit, and like himself, had come to die in the room of those wicked children; that he had given them his book (the Bible) to tell them what they had done, what he had undertaken and accomplished for them, and what they must do to live with him and his Father; that it was this good Being who had put it into the hearts of the good people to send their money, and be interested for their children. This, and much more, being interpreted by one of the scholars, he exclaimed, "Oh! he must be a good Being, we must love him."

The Indians are so much in the spirit of agriculture, that they are clearing very considerable plantations of land, in convenient situations throughout the nation; and many of the best characters of them have invited decent white families to live with them as tenants, and assist them in acquiring the art of husbandry. This, if prudently managed, will cement the bonds of friendship between the red and white people; diffuse the knowledge of the English language through the nation; increase a spirit of industry, and enhance the value of property. Many of these families are serious professors of religion, and their example will establish the observance of the Sabbath, and some of the important usages of Christianity; and efface the pernicious influence of those base wretches who have sought for shelter from punishment in the nation. Is not the time of their salvation near at hand?

I am, &c.

GIDEON BLACKBURN.

Extracts

Extracts from the Manuscript Journal of the Rev. Mr. John Sergeant, Missionary to the Stockbridge Indians in the vicinity of Oneida, from the Society for propagating Christian Knowledge.

Mr. Sergeant having returned from visiting his family at Stockbridge, Massachusetts, to his Indian friends at New-Stockbridge, and having informed them of the encouragement given by the Corporation of Harvard College towards their school, (50 dollars per year) and also that the Society in Scotland had agreed to support two school-masters among their brethren to the westward, &c. to this information one of their chiefs made the following reply:

"Father, we are very glad to see you this evening, to smoke a pipe of friendship together.

"We greatly rejoice to hear your voice again, and to be informed that you have been well ever since you left us—that you had a prosperous journey—that your family is well—that through the merciful care of our God you have been carried through so long a path. Father, we now thank you for what you have done for us.

"We desire to express our gratitude to the chiefs at Boston who take care of poor Indians; that they have granted us some further assistance towards the support of our schools. We kindly accept the advice from them sent by you, that we faithfully do our part in helping the school-master in his worldly business, so that he may be enabled to keep constantly in his school; and also that we supply the school with wood to keep the house warm.

"We greatly rejoice to hear the good news you have just told us, that the good people over the water have in their great kindness engaged to send and support two school-masters, to instruct the children of some of our western brethren. We hope to hear before another year that these instructors are gone, and the good work begun."

An Account of a New Year's Visit.

This being the first day of the year, an elderly woman invited all the members of the church, who were in town, to dine at her house. After we were all collected, she addressed us in the following manner:

"My Christian friends, I am now old. I do not expect to live but a little while longer. Considering my age, and often infirmities, I had no reason to expect to see this new year. But since we are all alive this day, I was desirous to see you all together, that we might pray together, brighten our chain of friendship, and talk a few moments about the affairs of Christ's kingdom, and the bounties of divine providence. I now feel happy to see you."

After dinner (said Mr. Sergeant) we parted in love, exhorting all to be more and more engaged in the service of our Lord and Master.

What a happy new year's visit! What an excellent example for white Christians to imitate!

The Observations of a Woman at Mr. Sergeant's House.

This evening (saith he) a woman, who had lately lost her husband, made me a visit, and said to me as follows:

"I have been a poor lost sinner. I have done many things I ought not to have done. I have often deceived myself in the things of religion. I find nothing but the power of God able to overcome the pride of my heart. Lately, when in the wood, my mind was wholly taken up with the concerns of eternity. Many things appeared new and strange to me. I see the great evil of sin, the vanity of all things of this world, the plague of my own natural heart. I was led to put my entire trust in the sovereign mercy of God, through Jesus Christ. It is my earnest desire that all my friends and neighbours would reprove me whenever I get out of the way."

Observations of a Pagan Tuskarora Chief.

Mr. Sergeant had been urging the necessity of a civilized life; and concluded

concluded with saying, "They must now set out in a new path, or they would be a ruined people." The Pagan, being a very sensible, observing man, said, "I see the necessity of it; I feel I am a poor, weak creature. When I am in my hunting walks, I often cry to the great Spirit for his protection. Also when I am called to make a public speech, I look to the same Spirit for wisdom. I see our hunting is almost gone; we must try to follow the path of white people, whom God manifestly blesses. We are like children as to getting our living by labour. I hope if white people love us, they will help us, and teach us how to live."

Solemn Reflections on the Duty of Parents to Children.

This evening, at a conference meeting, a man who had lately lost a child, by a long and lingering sickness, near the close of the meeting addressed us in the following manner:

"My friends, I have heretofore supposed myself to be converted, and become a friend to Christ, but, on strict examination, had given up my hope. Lately I have sensibly felt the displeasure of my Maker, in the death of my late dear little son. I have now clear views of God's almighty power; the right he has to deprive me of all my comforts, whenever he sees fit. I have lately viewed God every where present, the sole proprietor of the world, and all things in it. My sins came clearly into my view. I saw I was a poor, dependent sinner. The neglect of duty towards my children came particularly into my view. I thought if my departed child should be lost, and, at the great day of judgment, should say, "My father, or my mother, you never warned me of sin; neither taught me the right way"—If this should be the case, my mouth would be stopped; I should have nothing to say. My friends, I wish you all to pray for me, that I may be preserved from sin, and kept in the right way."

At a Conference Meeting,

A young man spoke and said, "My friends, I feel my most wretched situation. I once thought it my duty to profess religion, but by my repeated falls into sin, I fear I never had the true knowledge of Christ. But still, I bless God I am continued to this time, and that it has pleased God to lay open my heart to me again, and renew my conviction."

Confession of a Female at a Church Meeting for the Sin of Intemperance.

"Brethren (said she) I went last fall to Albany, with my sick daughter, not allowing myself to taste a drop of liquor all the way, nor had I tasted any spirits for several years. But falling into company with some of my kindred, they urged me to drink with them. I drank, as I suppose, about a gill, which overset me. When I came to myself, I thought much on my sin and fall. It happened on the Lord's day. I thought I had committed an unpardonable sin. I immediately asked the forgiveness of my companions—have never tasted any more from that time to this. I have frequently humbled myself before the Lord for this my great sin and fall. Now I come to ask your forgiveness; and, if you think me worthy, that you would again receive me into your charity."

Confession of an aged Woman.

This morning an old woman came to see me, and said, "I have thought much of what I have heard from you of late. I have long been a perfect *Heathen* in my heart:—never believed in the religion of Christ. I find my nature is decaying. I shall soon appear before my Judge. I greatly fear and tremble. I never made a prayer till about a week past. I have had a long struggle with my wicked heart. Now I think I love to pray. I am a poor miserable creature, not worthy of any favour."

Declaration

Declaration of a Tuskarora Woman under Conviction.

Mr. Sergeant asked her how she now viewed the things of religion, the all-important concerns of her soul?

"I view them (said she) after the same manner I have heretofore done. I consider myself like a dog, dependent on his master for support. If God shows me any mercy, I shall rejoice; if not, it is right I should be denied. But I will wait in the way of humility."

Sentimental Remark of an aged Man.

This evening attended a conference meeting. An old man one of the professors, said, "I feel, by my old age, I must soon die. I think I feel the importance of being prepared; and, in order for that important change, I know I must be humble. I think I often feel like a little child, and often humble myself before my Saviour." *Blessed temper! Whoso humbleth himself shall be exalted!*

Observations made by a young Man at a Conference Meeting.

"My friends, it is now seven years since I was first awakened, and thought myself converted. But by frequently falling into sin, I find myself still a stranger to true religion, and have continued in a stupid, forlorn condition. Of late, my mind has been affected with my awful condition. The calls and invitations of the gospel appear to me to be persuasive and pressing. I find myself without excuse. I am a wretched, undone sinner. Pray for me, my dear friends. I find I can make no other prayer than what was made by the Publican, "*God be merciful to me a sinner.*"

Declaration of a Female, in order to join the Church.

At a church meeting, at which the wife of Ceusick, a Tuskarora woman, was examined at her desire to join our church, she being requested to manifest her mind, said, "I have long been attentive to religion. Some years since I thought I was converted, but soon found my soul in darkness. But, through the mercy of God, my mind of late has been delivered, and the difficulties removed. I now feel it my indispensable duty to take upon me the public profession of religion; and hope, by the grace of God, to be able to live agreeably to this holy profession."

Immortality of the Soul.

A conference meeting.—Question, "What evidence can we bring to convince a Heathen of the doctrine of the immortality of the soul?" One answered, "the best evidence was from God's word, which plainly declared it." Another answered, "that in this life the mind of man can never find complete satisfaction."

Extract of a Letter from a Friend belonging to the northwest Congregational Society of North Yarmouth, dated

March 3, 1808.

"The reformation in our society has, for two or three months, been on the decline. The attention to religion, however, is serious, and we have abundant reason to give thanks.

"Since last June, fifty-eight persons have been added to the church; and five adults, and fifty children, have been baptised. There are also several persons, who give considerable evidence of a good work begun in them, but who have not yet made a public profession. The church meets every Wednesday evening to pray for the out-pouring of the Holy Spirit, and for the increase of the Redeemer's kingdom. Professors and others meet every Sabbath evening for a conference on religion. On the Lord's day the meeting-house is well filled. Our worthy pastor is unwearied in his labours of preaching, visiting, &c.

"There

"There is a religious attention, more than common, in the other Congregational societies in this town. At Portland, also, a goodly number appear to have chosen the good part, and have of late made a public profession."

To the above extract, I would add, that the *fifty-eight* persons mentioned, as lately added to the church, are a number large in proportion to the congregation, which contains less than an hundred families, and a considerable number of individuals which belonged to the church before. It appears, therefore, that the gospel has had a remarkable course in the place. It may also be useful to state, that the congregation at large, and almost without exception, has been for several years speculatively orthodox in religious sentiments; that their children, in a good measure, have been brought up in the good old way of saying the Westminster Catechism to their parents, schoolmasters, and minister; and that these children principally are the happy subjects of the good work.

Extract of a Letter from Joseph Merrill, missionary from the M. M. Society, to his Father.

VERNON, (N.Y.) *Jan.* 5, 1808.

Honoured Parent,

"MY labours have been somewhat fatiguing, but my health and bodily strength have been equal to my day.

"My situation is abundantly more pleasant than I expected. I could not be treated with more friendship and attention were I in my father's house. Some with tears have requested, that if I should be sick, they might be my nurses, and their house my home without any expense to me. Others have with equal freedom offered me a supply of money, if I would make known my wants.

"In the remaining part of my mission, I shall visit the churches and people where I have before travelled, where, if any thing can be known by their parting tears, I shall be received cordially.

"People are very attentive to preaching; many appear solemn, and some devout and hungry Christians. I have preached 125 times, rode about 1500 miles, attended frequent conferences, and visited several schools, and many private families. I have now been twenty-six weeks on my mission."

FOREIGN.

HAPPY EFFECTS OF SUNDAY SCHOOLS IN NORTH WALES.

Extract of a Letter from Rev. T. Charles, (Bala,) to a young Lady in London.

"I SHOULD prove myself unfaithful to my promise to you, were I not to give you a little further account of our children and young people, and the happy progress they make in acquiring the most important of all knowledge, the knowledge of the book of God. That the great God should condescend to give us a Book, I never think of now, of late, without astonishment and praise. I can say, I have really seen the worth of it more than I ever did before, since I have been constantly in the habit of seeing with what eagerness and pleasure the poor children treasure an amazing quantity of it in their memories. Last month I visited many parts in all the six counties; and it rejoiced me much to find that Sunday schools are now set up in most districts. The number of schools and of scholars in each is much increased this summer, beyond what they have been at any period before. Not only children and young persons, but many middle-aged, and some grey-headed, have not only learnt to read, but have learnt many chapters out within these six months. In many districts all attend the schools, and are either teachers or learners;

learners; and the employment of the Sunday school is the principal topic of conversation through the week; the number that attends our meetings for catechising, to repeat chapters, and to be catechised, is often so great that no chapel can contain them. In that case we hold our meetings in the open air, in the street, or on a common, or from the window of the chapel, and the children out of doors in the court. Hundreds of children from all parts attend these exercises with wonderful delight. Many will repeat chapters and make responses to almost any question properly asked them, with great seriousness and accuracy, and loud enough for 2 or 3,000 people to hear them distinctly.

"These meetings are frequently very affecting seasons; and the people flock together in great numbers, and with more pleasure to hear the children catechised, than they do to hear sermons. Frequently a dry eye is not to be seen, on these occasions, among many thousand people; and sometimes the feelings of the poor children are so moved, that they can hardly make the response without sobbing and tears. There are no bounds to their learning. One little girl twelve years old has learned the whole book of Psalms out; and has now made considerable progress in learning the New Testament. Many can repeat whole epistles, such as that to the Ephesians, to the Romans, the Hebrews, &c. A great number can repeat from *one* to a *hundred and fifty chapters*. Not only children, but grown people, learn the holy scriptures out and repeat them publicly on occasions. These public repetitions I find have a very beneficial effect to induce others to learn. To crown all, hundreds of our children are under serious concern about their souls and eternal things. In two districts in Anglesey, very nearly, if not quite all the children and young people meet together in religious societies, to be conversed with about their souls. One thing more must finish my account; and that is, hitherto, it is a growing work; and wherever it generally prevails, great reformation of manners attends it, and great attention to all religious ordinances. These, my dear young friend, are the pleasing accounts I have to give you of the Lord's tender mercies to our poor dear children. Dear they are indeed; beyond expression so! I reckon this one of the happiest years of my life! I feel what I never felt before in the same degree; the joy of the salvation of others! If I should be spared another year, I look forward with great confidence for still greater things. It a glorious seed time: and why may I not look with assured confidence for a plentiful harvest? Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gifts!"

T. CHARLES.

[*Lon. Evan. Mag.*

Poetry.

THE TARES AND WHEAT.

See in the outer church below,
The tares and wheat together grow;
But Christ ere long will weed the crop,
And pluck the tares in anger up.

The same we seem, while thus we meet,
Strangers might fancy all were wheat;
But to the Saviour's searching eyes,
The tare appears without disguise.

O how 'twill aggravate our case,
To perish under means of grace;
Nought will avail, how much we knew,
How long among the wheat we grew!

Spar'd are the tares for various ends,
Some for the sake of praying friends;
Others the Lord against their will,
Employs his counsels to fulfil.

What though they rise both tall and strong,
His plan will not require them long;
In harvest when he saves his own,
The tares shall into hell be thrown.

S. E.

[*Ev. Int.*